








CT Voices for Children



First for Kids 2002 Celebration






*Honoring citizens for
effective advocacy
and public leadership
on behalf of all of
Connecticut's children,
youth and families*



December 3, 2002

*The New Haven Lawn Club
193 Whitney Avenue
New Haven, Connecticut*

5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.



*Connecticut Voices for Children
33 Whitney Avenue
New Haven, CT 06510*

ABOUT CONNECTICUT VOICES FOR CHILDREN

Connecticut Voices for Children is a statewide nonprofit organization committed to promoting leadership, policy change and investment on behalf of *all* of Connecticut's children and youth. We believe that *all* of Connecticut's young people should grow up healthy and safe, have opportunities for successful learning from birth through adulthood, live free from the limiting effects of poverty, prosper under the loving guidance of caring adults, and have the opportunity to give something back to their communities along the way.

Connecticut Voices for Children works on a broad range of issues, including state tax and budget, family economic security, children's health and mental health, supports for grandparents raising their grandchildren, technology and learning, early care and education, youth workforce investment, and Connecticut's income, digital, health and educational divides. Our research and policy reports are widely cited by the media and other organizations and are all published on our website, CT KidsLink — www.ckidslink.org.

A strong supporter of coalition work, Connecticut Voices founded the CT Child and Family Advocacy Network, the CT Child and Family Research Partnership, and the CT Girls and Technology Network. We are founding members of the CT Juvenile Justice Alliance and the CT Early Childhood Alliance. We continue to be very proud of our role as a founding partner in Camp Totokett, the widely-honored Greater New Haven area summer experience for children living with HIV/AIDS. At the national level, Connecticut Voices is a member of the LIFT (Let's Invest in Families Today) initiative, organized by the National Center for Children in Poverty and funded by The Annie E. Casey Foundation. We are also a member of the national Economic Analysis and Research Network, the State Fiscal Analysis Initiative, the Early Care and Education Communications Collaborative, and the National Association of Child Advocates.

Connecticut Voices for Children celebrates accomplishment and service of both young people and adults through our annual *Youth Spirit Awards* in April and our *First for Kids Awards* in December. Our Young Policy Fellows program attracts talented college and graduate students who desire a range of experiences in policy analysis and advocacy and our newly created Solnit Fellowship offers a full-time position to exceptional recent college graduates with a genuine interest in advancing public policy to benefit children and youth.

Our active communications program includes sending E-Notes, our electronic newsletter, to 2,000-plus residents of Connecticut and beyond. We provide general and targeted mailings on a variety of topics, and we annually host a series of forums to bring Connecticut and national leaders together on the kinds of issues identified above.

And because policy change is often possible only through legislation, Connecticut Voices works closely with our partner lobbying organization, Advocates for Connecticut's Children and Youth, Inc., which mobilizes concerned citizens to work on these issues in the Connecticut General Assembly each year.

CONNECTICUT VOICES FOR CHILDREN
4th Annual *First for Kids* Ceremony

Welcome

ALBERT J. SOLNIT LEADERSHIP AWARD
Representative Christel Truglia

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
Professor Edward Zigler, Yale University

STATEWIDE CHILD ADVOCACY AWARD
Jeanne Milstein
and the Office of the Child Advocate

MEDIA AWARD
Ann Nyberg, Channel 8 News Anchor

CITIZEN ADVOCACY AWARD
Harry Orlick

COMMUNITY ADVOCACY AWARD
Dr. Eric Cooper
President, National Urban Alliance for Effective Education

YOUTH MENTOR AWARD
Alan MacKenzie
Director, Our Piece of the Pie

Closing Remarks



ALBERT J. SOLNIT LEADERSHIP AWARD

State Representative Christel Truglia

“A servant of the people” most aptly describes Stamford Representative to the Connecticut General Assembly, Christel Truglia. For more than a decade, Representative Truglia has worked tirelessly for the people of Connecticut, with a special commitment to the needs of children and those with mental health challenges.

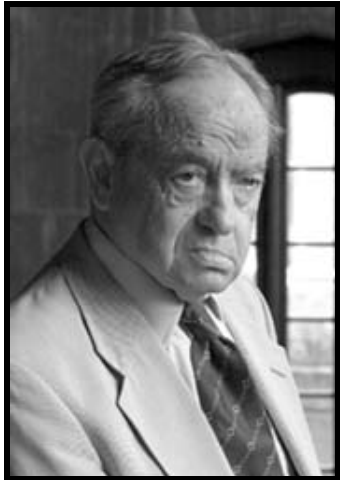
Connecticut Voices for Children honors her this evening with the *Albert J. Solnit Leadership Award* for her compassion and enduring resolve to improve the lives of our most vulnerable citizens. Named after Dr. Albert Solnit, a world-renowned Connecticut child psychiatrist who served as leader of the Yale University Child Study Center and the state’s Department of Mental Health and Addictions Services, this award is given annually to an individual who has demonstrated unwavering public commitment to improving the lives of the state’s children and youth.

Elected to the Connecticut General Assembly in 1988, Representative Christel Truglia was appointed Assistant Majority Leader in 1995, and she currently serves on several legislative committees including Appropriations, Human Services and the Select Committee on Children. She is especially well known for her legislative advocacy to expand Medicaid coverage for children and develop community-based treatment facilities for youth in crisis.

Representative Truglia’s work has already earned her many honors. These accolades include the *Child Advocacy Legislature Leadership Award*, *Child Care Champion of the State of Connecticut*, *Children’s Health and Well-Being Award*, *Legislator of the Year* and recognition by the Connecticut Chapter of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill.

In her hometown of Stamford, Representative Truglia is known for her “accessibility, compassion, commitment, hard work and soft-spoken determination to get the job done.” She is the founder and chairperson of the Truglia Thumbelina Fund, established to respond to the needs of children when there are no other resources available. She has had the privilege of having a private audience with Mother Teresa and was bestowed the Cross of Jerusalem by Pope John Paul II.

Christel Truglia, woman of the people, mother of three and grandmother of seven, is a model for us all. She stands for what is right, advocates for those who need our help, cares for those that others may not love, and always brings honor and effectiveness to public service. For her lifetime of service, Connecticut Voices for Children is honored to present Representative Christel Truglia with the *2002 Albert J. Solnit Leadership Award*.



LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Professor Edward Zigler

There is hardly a person who has not heard of Head Start, America's federally funded program that aims to give disadvantaged children and their families a better start toward successful learning. The father of Head Start, Dr. Edward Zigler, is a longtime resident of Greater New Haven, a staunch advocate for school reform, and a giant in the field of child development.

"Ed" as his many students affectionately call him, is Yale University's Sterling Professor of Psychology. He is also head of the psychology section of the Child Study Center and Director (and founder) of the Bush Center in Child Development and Social Policy. Professor Zigler is founder of Schools of the 21st Century, an educational reform model adopted by more than 1,300 schools nationwide, and the author, coauthor, and editor of hundreds of scholarly publications. Additionally, he has conducted extensive investigations on topics related to normal child development, psychopathology and mental retardation.

In the early 1970s, Dr. Zigler served as the first director of the U.S. Office of Child Development (now the Administration on Children, Youth, and Families) and Chief of the U.S. Children's Bureau. He was a member of the Advisory Committee on Head Start Quality and Expansion and the planning committee for the Early Head Start program. Dr. Zigler currently serves as Honorary Chair of the National Advisory Panel for the Head Start 2010 Project.

Dr. Zigler has received honors and awards too numerous to count, most recently the Higher Education Lifetime Achievement Community Service Award presented by the Connecticut Board of Governors for Higher Education and the Commission on National and Community Service. But these honors, while well deserved, do not tell the whole story of this great man. Quoted and debated by great leaders and parents alike, Ed Zigler has been the nation's conscience on matters concerning the development of young children. Whether proposing universal early care and education or paid family leave, Ed Zigler *is* our children's voice.

In addition to his research, policy analysis, and public commentary, Professor Zigler leaves another legacy. Hundreds of his students now occupy positions of stature in academia, government and the nonprofit sector. A true believer in public service, Zigler is also a realist and effective advisor. Asked by one student how he had survived the twists and turns of politics and policy, he replied, "You need a strong tolerance for ambiguity. Nothing in politics lasts forever, so the winner is the one with the greatest staying power."

Fortunately, for the children of Connecticut and the children of America, Edward Zigler has had great "staying power." It is with much affection and profound respect that Connecticut Voices for Children honors Edward Zigler with the *2002 First for Kids Lifetime Achievement Award*.



STATEWIDE CHILD ADVOCACY AWARD

Jeanne Milstein and the Office of the Child Advocate

Tenacious (t-'nA-shs): *persistent in maintaining or adhering to something valued; see Connecticut's Child Advocate Jeanne Milstein.*

Jeanne Milstein was appointed to lead the Connecticut Office of the Child Advocate in 2000, following a long professional career dedicated to advocating for the state's children and youth. She brings a passionate concern for children, unquestioned integrity, and unwavering tenacity to her post. "When families and caregivers fail their children, when children come to us after their families have failed them, we -- as a community -- are their last hope of trust, compassion and nurturance," remarked Milstein.

The Office of the Child Advocate oversees the protection and care of Connecticut children and advocates for their well-being. Jeanne and her staff work diligently with the CT Office of the Attorney General, the Judicial Branch and other state agencies, state and local law enforcement, the Connecticut General Assembly and similar offices in other states to ensure the protection of the state's most vulnerable and youngest citizens.

Jeanne's voice is a constant beacon of hope, and she speaks frequently on issues ranging from the conditions at the state's juvenile correctional facilities to the delivery of child protection and children's mental health services. "We spend nearly \$600 million a year to protect Connecticut's children," Milstein reported in a June article in the Hartford Courant. "We have an obligation to make sure they are safe and doing well. We owe that responsibility to the children and the taxpayers."

A graduate of Cornell University, Milstein has served in the Connecticut Department of Children and Families, Connecticut Commission on Children, and Connecticut Department of Human Resources. She also brings experience in the private sector, where in 1988 she founded and operated Day Care Management, Inc. and Connectikids Child Care and Learning Centers. This company was the first in the state to provide child care facilities in office parks and major employment sites.

Jeanne and the entire staff at the Office of the Child Advocate are heroes for many children and youth. They provide a strong public voice when children in need have no other voice available. Because of the tireless efforts of her office, thousands of Connecticut children are safer every day.

Connecticut Voices for Children is honored to award The Office of the Child Advocate and its leader, Jeanne Milstein, with the *2002 First for Kids Statewide Child Advocacy Award*.



MEDIA AWARD

Ann Nyberg

Her familiar face brings the nightly news into thousands of Greater New Haven homes each weeknight. She is a skilled and highly effective broadcast journalist, but today we honor Channel 8 News Anchor Ann Nyberg for the joy and hope she has brought to hundreds of children away from the lights of the television cameras.

A busy mother of three teenage daughters, Ann is ever present in the Greater New Haven area as an ambassador of good will and community involvement. She recently served as a judge for the 2002 CT RIDEWORKS Environmental Expressions Contest in which 21 out of over 1000 area elementary school students were honored for their winning artistic efforts. She was the keynote speaker at Groton's Child Abuse Prevention Month awards and Honorary Chairperson for the 25th anniversary celebration of the Coordinating Council for Children in Crisis. She also participated in a development event for Leeway, CT's only AIDS-dedicated skilled nursing facility, serving some of the state's most vulnerable citizens.

Her greatest love, however, is the *Toy Closet*—a program she began in 1993 at Yale-New Haven Children's Hospital to comfort young patients entering the hospital. Ann created the giving program because, "I wanted to do something that could, for even a little while, ease the pain of these children." With her continued support, the Yale-New Haven Hospital Auxiliary collects toys year round that are given to children when they are admitted to the hospital. For many children, that small gift transforms a scary experience into one marked by smiles and much greater comfort. A colleague and the Executive Director of Friends of Yale-New Haven Children's Hospital, Jan Weiswasser, describes Ann as "a woman of great intelligence, great heart and great persistence. She is always there to support kids and communities."

Ann has also given her time to encourage attention to children's issues as part of the electoral process. In 1998 and again this past October, she served as moderator for the Greater New Haven Candidates' Forum for gubernatorial and legislative candidates from across the region. With both skill and humor, she guided candidates through a challenging question and answer session — exploring critical issues of children's health, early care, school readiness and the budget.

Ann Nyberg has had a long and distinguished career in journalism, having spent the last 16 years with WTNH in New Haven. We recognize and respect her terrific journalism, but today we honor her for her dedication to young people with Connecticut Voices' *2002 First for Kids Media Award*.



CITIZEN ADVOCACY AWARD

Harry Orlick

"It's about the kids, plain and simple," he says with a twinkle in his eye but a look that says, "This is really important." Harry Orlick has a knack for cutting to the chase when children are involved and the service system lacks clarity, commitment or resources.

"How can we get our systems to believe that all kids can achieve? What can I do to help?" These basic questions drive this retired IBM executive to commit thousands of hours to help educational, workforce and advocacy organizations "make it better for the kids."

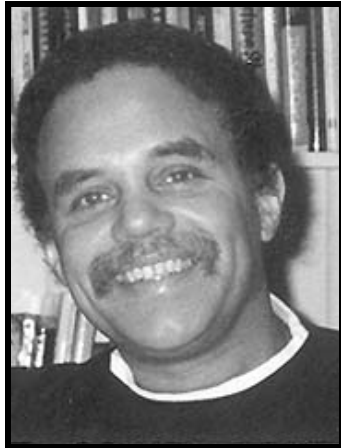
Perhaps his most prized accomplishment is the Stamford Public Schools' Academy of Information Technology (AIT), where he served as a founder and daily participant in this wonderfully successful marriage of technology and rigorous academic preparation for students at risk of educational failure. Through his tireless efforts, students at the new high-tech high school enjoy small class sizes, the latest technological advances, a caring faculty, exposure to the business culture and unparalleled successes. Dr. Christine Casey, former Assistant Superintendent of the Stamford Public Schools, reflects on Harry's contribution. "Without Harry's impatience pushing us onward, we would still be debating the merits of the project. We now have a model high tech high school because Harry doesn't know the meaning of the word 'impossible!'"

Harry served on the management and design teams for the project, formed the business advisory board -- a mainstay of support for AIT-- and recruited students and teachers. In addition to lending his expertise in marketing, sales, and project management, Harry has been a mentor to the students, helping them reach their potential as proud and productive adults.

Jason Simon, a graduate of the first Academy class and now a highly successful University of Connecticut undergrad, remembers Harry well. "Mr. Orlick is a guy who, whether you like it or not, will tell you what he feels you need to work on. He helped mold me into a better presenter, speaker and all around person. He went from calling me good, to pretty good, to slick and now totally dangerous!"

Harry's wife of 46 years, Lu, a long-time kindergarten teacher herself, offers support and counsel as he continues to redefine his "retirement." With one eye on his own three children and two new grandchildren, Harry has now turned his attention to "the little ones" as he helps Connecticut Voices for Children convince business and others that investing in early care and education really is "about the kids" and "about the future."

Connecticut Voices for Children is greatly honored to present Harry Orlick with the *2002 First For Kids Citizen Advocacy Award*.



COMMUNITY ADVOCACY AWARD

Dr. Eric Cooper

If you have ever heard Eric Cooper talk about kids and education, especially in the context of his hometown of Stamford, Connecticut, then you know how easy it was to select him as the 2002 *First For Kids Community Advocacy* honoree.

With the fervor and conviction of a Baptist minister and the tenacity of a bulldog, Eric spreads his message about the need for systemic educational reform across the nation. Eric's passion, his unremitting belief in the ability of all children to learn, and his honest and outspoken communications style inspires -- and demands -- that we commit to building new leadership and instructional capacity for all children in 21st century America.

Dr. Cooper currently serves as President of the National Urban Alliance for Effective Education where his brand of educational advocacy is grounded in the belief that all children, regardless of skin color, economic background, or presumed intellect, must be given the opportunity to reach their true potential. "A child's mind," he argues, "is that child's most powerful asset."

He believes that investments in teachers and communities, especially the most impoverished, are the only way to close this nation's educational achievement gap. "Meeting high standards must be the universal goal for all students, educators, families, and communities," says Cooper. "Professional development is the engine of the advance being made by effective schools. System reform is the vehicle."

In an article published in the June/July issue of Reading Today, Dr. Cooper writes, "When we talk about school reform, we are primarily talking about reforming what happens in disadvantaged communities where schools lack resources and where parents, because of financial circumstances, struggle to survive...Urban school reform is a fight that we all must take seriously and commit to winning if we are to see social justice for all."

Eric Cooper lives in Stamford with his wife and their two children. He is a frequent contributor to the Stamford Advocate, where he writes first hand about the challenges facing young families and the obstacles encountered daily by educators. "When we are able to break the glass ceiling for inner city children and see achievement gains go way beyond system expectations, that is when I am the proudest."

The children of Connecticut will have greater opportunities for learning because of the strong, impassioned, effective voice of Eric Cooper. We are proud to honor him with Connecticut Voices' 2002 *First for Kids Community Advocacy Award*.



YOUTH MENTOR AWARD

Alan MacKenzie, Our Piece of the Pie

Alan MacKenzie is a man with a belief that all young people can succeed. "Alan is a role model for me because he says we're not turning away any young people," remarks Gedaliz Maldonado. Gedaliz is one of hundreds of youth between the ages of 10 and 21 who have worked and learned at *Our Piece of the Pie* (OPP), a program of Hartford-based Southend Community Services.

Building on 25 years of corporate experience, Alan founded OPP in 1996 as a Youth Business Incubator where young people learn through hands-on experiences in work and entrepreneurship. Like Gedaliz, who began as a participant and is now the manager of OPP's Youth Work Experience, many of the program's success stories begin with Alan. "Alan MacKenzie noticed I had an interest in art and said there was a program at OPP named JAM (Junior Art Makers) and I could be part of it," remembers Marc-Candy Benaca, a graduate of Bulkeley High School and current student at the New England Institute of Art and Communication. Through OPP, Marc-Candy has also learned the importance of giving back. "When I come back [to JAM] I can help youth by doing workshops on some of the new art techniques I will learn in college."

Alan has assembled an incredible team of committed staff, entrepreneurs and mentors. "We do whatever it takes," noted one staff member, "to assure that these youth -- who are often written off by society based on their circumstances and behavior -- can succeed in real world work and learning environments." For many youth, it involves literacy work, therapeutic intervention, integrated learning services, employment and training experiences, case management and involvement in the youth business model programs.

OPP participants are referred by the CT Judicial Branch and the Department of Children and Families and engage in a series of business "incubators," with integrated life skills and pre-employment skills training, including River Wright Boat Builders, Echoes from the Streets, and Drumming Full Circle. These businesses are led by an entrepreneur, a youth development specialist and a young person from the program and enable at risk youth to develop more positive self-concepts and attitudes about themselves, work and learning, to improve their basic employability skills, and to participate in a broad range of employment and business models.

America has also discovered Alan MacKenzie. This summer, the U.S. Department of Labor and the National Youth Employment Coalition honored *Our Piece of the Pie* with their highly valued PEPNet (Promising and Effective Practices Network) designation for national best practices in youth development and employment.

It is our *great* pleasure to honor Alan MacKenzie with the Connecticut Voices for Children *2002 Youth Mentor Award* for changing the lives and inspiring the futures of Connecticut's young people.

2001 First for Kids Honorees

ALBERT J. SOLNIT LEADERSHIP AWARD: Senator Kevin B. Sullivan

MEDIA AWARD: The Hartford Courant's: Dave Altimari, Dwight Blint, Susan Campbell, Beth Hamilton, Andrew Julien, Kathy Megan, Daryl Perch, Colin Poitras, and Eric Weiss

CITIZEN ADVOCACY AWARD: Sheila Amdur

COMMUNITY ADVOCACY AWARDS: Reverend Bonita Grubbs and Marilyn Ondrasik

YOUTH MENTOR AWARDS: Michael Duggan, Will MacAdams, and Richard Sugarman

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2000 First for Kids Honorees

POLICY LEADERSHIP AWARD: Lt. Governor M. Jodi Rell

ALBERT J. SOLNIT LEADERSHIP AWARD: Senator Toni Harp

COMMUNITY ADVOCACY AWARD: Fernando Betancourt

CITIZEN ADVOCACY AWARDS: Eva Bunnell and Norma Schatz

VISION TO ACTION AWARDS: Paula Armbruster, Anne Calabresi, Henry Fernandez, III, Matthew Klein, Roslyn Meyer, and Jerome Meyer
Founders of LEAP—Leadership, Education, and Athletics in Partnership, Inc.

CT VOICES FOUNDERS' AWARD: Priscilla "Penny" Canny

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1999 First for Kids Honorees

A SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO: Albert J. Solnit, MD

ALBERT J. SOLNIT LEADERSHIP AWARD: Representative John Thompson

VOLUNTEERISM AWARD: Barbara Colley and Rev. Gary Smith, Camp Totokett

CITIZEN ADVOCACY AWARD: Marva and Willie Jones, Grandparents

MEDIA AWARD: Stephen Winters, Connecticut Post